

## Support for Veterans and their Caregivers

### Butler VA's Caregiver Support Program

After her husband of 50 years took a devastating fall last Christmas, Laurel Beitsinger found herself living a true nightmare – a husband with life-threatening medical issues who needed care more than ever during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to a few phone calls, Laurel ended up being introduced to the Butler VA's Caregiver Support program. Without the people in the program and the knowledge she gained from them, she is not sure she would have made it through such a challenging time.

Laurel is the primary caregiver for her husband Barry, a U.S. Army Veteran who served as a combat medic in Vietnam. Laurel does not like to call caregiving a "job" and she wants to be the one there for her husband, but she admits it is very difficult, especially at age 74.

"The Butler VA Caregiver Support program is so wonderful. Some people just do their jobs; these people care. It's a different feeling here. They really care about helping the caregiver as well as the Veteran," said Laurel. "To know they are there for me as the caregiver is so comforting. It's great to have a built-in support system."

The Butler VA offers a number of services to support caregivers and the Veterans they care for whether it's in-home help, someone to listen, or anything in between.

"Once a month, at least, there's something going on to support us as caregivers. I have never seen anything like

this in the public sector," said Laurel. "And, they are always there for me. I just need to call and ask. If they don't know, they find out and call me back."

Recently, the Butler VA held a Caregiver Resource Fair and Laurel was able to attend knowing her husband was in good care at the VA while she went. She especially enjoyed the virtual reality activity available at the event for caregivers.

"My husband and I loved going to the beach. Because of his physical problems now, it would be too difficult to go. But I put on those goggles and they put in the virtual reality, and I felt like I was at the beach watching the waves."

Laurel spent much of her career as a nurse, yet jokes that caregiving is perhaps her toughest assignment yet. "Sometimes you're just mentally and physically worn out. It's comforting to know we have this wrap-around service at the Butler VA."

If you're a caregiver for a Veteran, you can get support by contacting the Butler VA. Call 878-271-6174 or visit [www.va.gov/butler-health-care/health-services/caregiver-program/](http://www.va.gov/butler-health-care/health-services/caregiver-program/) to learn more today.



“To know they are there for me as the caregiver is so comforting. It's great to have a built-in support system.” - Laurel Beitsinger, Family Caregiver



If you are a caregiver for a Veteran, you can get support by contacting the Butler VA caregiver support program. We can help with:

- Getting caregiver assistance available through VA
- Matching you with services and benefits
- Connecting you with local resources and programs

**Enroll today!** [www.choose.va.gov](http://www.choose.va.gov).

## November is National Family Caregivers Month

You are there to support your Veteran; we are here to support you. National Family Caregivers Month is celebrated every November and is observed to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country. Please consider joining our Butler VA community of Veterans and caregivers at one of our many virtual events this month: [www.va.gov/butler-health-care/events/](http://www.va.gov/butler-health-care/events/)

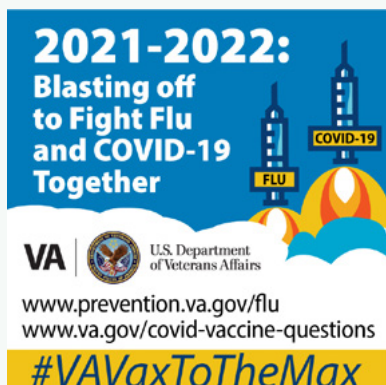


## BUTLER VA EXPANDS OFFERING OF COVID-19 BOOSTER SHOTS

The Butler VA is now offering Veterans the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine booster shots. A walk-in clinic is available from 9am-2pm, Monday-Friday at the Butler VA's New Castle Road Campus located at 325 New Castle Road.

Veterans who receive care in VA and are due for booster shots will be identified through VA's Veterans Outreach Tool then contacted and advised of the recommended booster shots, which may be offered by appointment or on a walk-in basis.

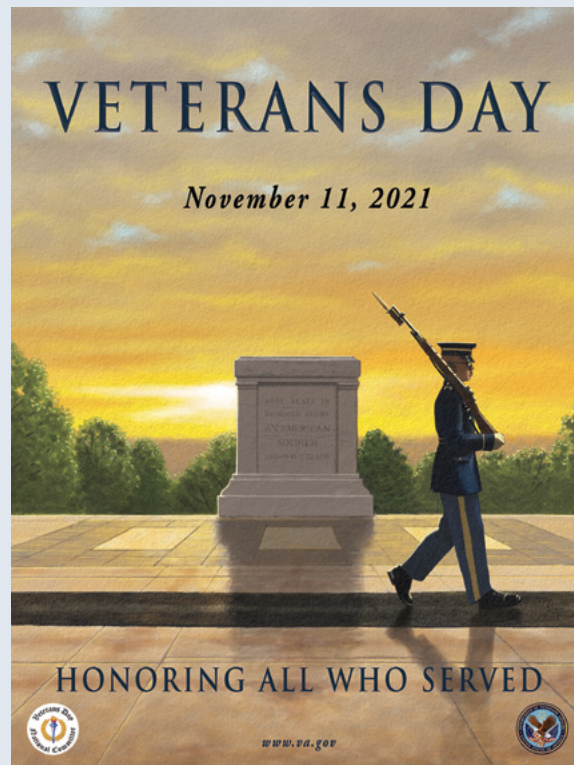
For more information, please contact the Butler VA's call center at 1-888-266-9040.



## IT'S TIME TO GET YOUR FLU SHOT!

Vaccination is the surest way to protect against getting the flu. Get your flu shot. Flu shots are the best way to prevent flu. During the pandemic, it is especially important to keep yourself healthy from flu.

Veterans enrolled in VA health care can get a free flu shot during their primary care appointment, or they can choose from one of more than 70,000 in-network retail pharmacies and urgent care/walk-in locations to get the flu shot: [www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/flushot.asp](http://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/flushot.asp)



## HONORING ALL WHO SERVED - VETERANS DAY

The theme for Veterans Day 2021 is centered on the centennial commemoration of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Located at Arlington National Cemetery, the Tomb was initially dedicated by the Army on Armistice Day, November 11, 1921, with the burial of an unknown service member from World War I. Over the past century, additional unknowns have been buried at the Tomb, and the site has become a people's memorial that inspires reflection on service, valor, sacrifice, and mourning.

SALUTE YOU

Thank you for your service  
BARRY BEITSINGER, U.S. Army



U.S. Army and Vietnam Veteran Barry Beitsinger served as a combat medic in Vietnam in '67-68

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Butler VA Health Care System



353 north duffy road . butler pa 16001

Let us "Salute You!" Contact the Butler VA Public Affairs Office for more information.



800.362.8262  
724.287.4781

[www.va.gov/butler-health-care](http://www.va.gov/butler-health-care)



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